

BOTANICAL NAME OF THE TEA SAGERETIA OF CHINA

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THE PAUPER'S TEA of China was first described by Linnaeus' one-time student and collector, Pehr Osbeck, on page 232 of his "Dagbok öfwer en Ostindisk Resa . . ." published in 1757. The short descriptive paragraph, freely translated from the Swedish, reads as follows:

Rhamnus Thea, or Pauper's Tea, is a fathom-high bush, the leaves of which are similar to those of common tea; but the flowers belong to the first Ordo of the fifth Class, are quite small and are fastened to the far ends of the branches which are again branched. Used as a tea by the poor, but in this place [the Danish Island] it served as a hedge. Called "Tja" [i.e., tea] in Chinese.

Linnaeus himself included some of Osbeck's Chinese plants in the 1753 edition of the *Species plantarum* (William T. Stearn, Introduction to the Ray Society facsimile edition, 1957), but not the pauper's tea. He did not notice the species in print until 1771 when, on page 207 of the *Mantissa*, he re-named it *Rhamnus theezans*. Immediately under his phrase-name, Linnaeus cited as a synonym the "*Rhamnus Thea* Osb. it. 232," and he followed this with an unusually full description. Linnaeus' epithet has been used for the same species ever since 1771. In 1826 it was combined with the generic name *Sageretia* A. Brongn. The name *Sageretia theezans* has survived in recent years because of the faith placed in the careful bibliographic work of C. Schneider (Pl. Wilson. 2: 227. 1914) and A. Rehder (Bibliogr. of Cult. Trees and Shrubs 436. 1949). Schneider and Rehder both deemed Osbeck's name a "*nomen nudum*" or a "*nomen*." They presumably considered Osbeck's few comments insufficient to constitute a description.

The question must be raised again, however, whether Linnaeus' name can stand under the present code of nomenclature. If Osbeck's name can be clearly typified, Linnaeus' name must be considered a superfluous, unusable synonym, despite the scantiness of Osbeck's description.

Osbeck's collections were turned over to Linnaeus. As far as I can determine through search in various herbaria and through correspondence, the only surviving Osbeck collections from China are those in the Linnaean Herbarium in London. I was able to examine and photograph parts of the Linnaean Herbarium in April, 1967. Two specimens are pertinent here, sheets 262.7 and 262.8 as numbered by Savage (Cat. Linn. Herb. 212. 1945). The latter, 262.8, is a mere fragment pinned to the other. Sheet 262.7 is an excellent flowering specimen, annotated "*Rhamnus theezans*" by Linnaeus himself. I can find no evidence that Linnaeus received specimens of this species from any other source than Osbeck. In the absence

of any information to the contrary, it may be concluded reasonably that 262.7 was prepared in China by Osbeck. I here designate it as the type of both *Rhamnus Thea* and *Rhamnus theezans*. This lectotypification serves to put Linnaeus' synonymy on a firm basis and to make quite clear that his epithet is superfluous and must give way to the prior one of Osbeck. Below, I give the necessary combination and the known and suggested synonymy.

Sageretia Thea (Osbeck) M. C. Johnst., comb. nov.

Rhamnus Thea Osbeck, Dagb. öfwer Ostind. Resa 232. 1757; P. Osbeck, Reise nach Ostindien und China, translated by J. G. Georgi, 210, 302. 1765; P. Osbeck, A voyage to China and the East Indies, transl. and with Faunula and Flora Sinensis by J. R. Forster, 1: 375. 1771; 2: 345. 1771.

Rhamnus theezans L. Mant. 207. 1771; J. F. Gmel. Syst. 2: 398. 1791; Poir. in Lam. Encycl. 4: 464. 1796; Willd. Sp. Pl. 1: 1094. 1797; R. & S. Syst. 5: 281. 1819; HBK. Nov. Gen. et Sp. 7: 54. 1824; Spreng. Syst. 1: 767. 1825; DC. Prodr. 2: 26. 1825.

Sageretia theezans (L.) Brongn. Mém. Fam. Rhamn. 53. 1826; G. Don, Gen. Syst. 2: 28. 1832; Benth. in Hook. Jour. Bot. 4: 42. 1852; Benth. Fl. Hongkong. 68. 1861; Maxim. Mém. Acad. St.-Pétersb. ser. 6. 10: 20. 1866; Miq. Ann. Mus. Bot. Lugd. Bat. 3: 32. 1867 (as "theesans"); Lawson in Hook. f., Fl. Brit. Ind. I. 1: 641. 1875; Hemsl. Jour. Linn. Soc. 23: 131. 1886; Matsumura, Bot. Mag. Tokyo 12: 22. 1898; C. Schneider, Pl. Wils. 2: 227. 1914; Rehder, Jour. Arnold Arb. 8: 166. 1927; Handel-Mazzetti, Symb. Sinicae, 7: 674. 1933; Rehder, Jour. Arnold Arb. 15: 13. 1934; Kanehira, Formosan Trees, rev. ed. 428. 1936; Rehder, Bibliogr. Cult. Trees and Shrubs 436. 1949; Li, Woody Fl. of Taiwan 516-518. 1963.

Ampelopsis chinensis Raf. Sylva Telluriana 33. 1838.

Sageretia theezans var. *integra* Dum.-Cours. ex G. Don, Gen. Syst. 2: 28. 1832, the generic name spelled "Segeretia."

Sageretia theezans var. *diospyrifolia* Lawson in Hook. f. Fl. Brit. Ind. I. 1: 641. 1875, as "diospirifolia."

Berchemia Chaneti Lévêillé, Repert. Sp. Nov. 10: 433. 1912.

Sageretia theezans var. *tomentosa* C. Schneider, Pl. Wils. 2: 228. 1914.

Sageretia Chanetii (Lévêillé) C. Schneider, *loc. cit.*, a provisional combination.

Sageretia Hayatae Kanehira, Formosan Trees rev. ed. 426. 1936; this synonymy suggested by Li, Woody Fl. of Taiwan 516-518. 1963.

Sageretia taiwaniana Hosokawa ex Masamune, Trans. Nat. Hist. Soc. Formosa, 28: 286. 1936; this synonymy suggested by Li, *loc. cit.*

?*Sageretia sikayoensis* Masamune, *loc. cit.*; this synonymy suggested by Li, *loc. cit.*

?*Sageretia theezans* var. *microphylla* Suessenguth ex Suessenguth & Overkott, Repert. Sp. Nov. 50: 329. 1941; tentative synonymy suggested by Li, *loc. cit.*

Of course, in a genus such as this one, so badly in need of monographic work, the synonymy is tentative at best and subject to much revision. The taxonomy of the Chinese species is particularly chaotic.

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